

IN THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1-96 (cancelled)

97. (currently amended) An electronic healthcare system, comprising:

a graphical user-interface;

at least one electronic computer communicating with the graphical user interface to provide:

(a) at least one electronic healthcare database including medical records;

(b) a set of different software applications usable in any order by a single user on the electronic computer, the software applications accessing records of the electronic healthcare database, each software application having an independent interface allowing a user to access records of the electronic healthcare database for different patients;

(c) a provider program running on the at least one electronic computer to:

(i) receive input from a user through the graphical user-interface identifying a new first software application to be initialized and opened;

(ii) review upon receipt of the user input, analyze other software applications currently open by the user to determine if a current any patient's patient whose records are being accessed by the currently open a currently open second software application[[s]];

(iii) if any patient's records are not being accessed, allowing an identification of a first patient through the graphical user-interface and initializing and opening the first software application to access records related to the identified first patient;

(iv) if any patient's records are being accessed, and (iii) initialize the new automatically opening and initializing the first software application[[s]] to also access records related to the current of the patient accessed by the second software application.

98. (currently amended) The electronic healthcare system of claim 97 wherein the provider program further receives input from the user directing the new first software application[[s]] to be opened in one of multiple workspaces, each workspace providing a graphically distinct display on the graphical user-interface, and wherein:

the provider program ~~reviews~~ analyzes the currently open software applications only in the identified one of the multiple workspaces.

99. (previously presented) The electronic healthcare system of claim 97 wherein the provider program further accepts input from a user to switch between workspaces.

100. (previously presented) The electronic healthcare system of claim 99 wherein the provider program further accepts input from a user to switch between open software applications within a workspace.

101. (currently amended) The electronic healthcare system of claim 97 wherein the ~~current~~ first patient is determined from a record identifier.

102. (currently amended) The electronic healthcare system of claim 97 wherein the ~~current~~ first patient is determined from a patient ~~identification-number~~ identifier.

103. (previously presented) The electronic healthcare system of claim 97 wherein the software applications include applications for scheduling patient appointments, applications for entering patient demographic data, applications for entering clinical documentation with respect to patient visits, applications for billing patients, and applications for clinical order entry.

104. (currently amended) The electronic healthcare system of claim 97 wherein the provider program further reviews the electronic healthcare database to identify additional data in the electronic healthcare database based on the ~~current~~ patient accessed by the second software application and uses the additional data to initialize the new first software application.

105. (previously presented) The electronic healthcare system of claim 97 wherein the provider program further receives input from the user to provide additional data.

106. (previously presented) The electronic healthcare system of claim 97 wherein the provider program includes:

a program database linking each software application to an identification of its required initialization data; and

wherein the provider program further executes to read the program database to initialize and open software applications;

whereby new software applications can be added to the electronic healthcare system by adding the new software applications and its required initialization data to the software applications database.

107. (previously presented)

The electronic healthcare system of claim 97 wherein the provider program further provides a set of common visual elements shared between the software applications.

108. (currently amended) A method of managing data of an electronic healthcare database holding medical records, comprising the steps of:

(a) providing a set of different software applications independently executable and usable in any order by a single user on the electronic computer, the software applications, each accessing different portions of the records of the electronic healthcare database, each software application having an independent interface allowing a user to access records of the electronic healthcare database for different patients;

(b) receiving input from a user of the electronic healthcare database through identifying a new first software application of the set of different software applications to be initialized and opened;

(c) reviewing upon the identification of step (b) analyzing any software applications currently open by the user and determining a current patient whose if any patient's records are being accessed by the currently open a currently open second software application[[s]];

(d) if any patient's records are not being accessed, allowing an identification of a first patient and initializing and opening the first software application to access records related to the identified first patient;

(e) if any patient's records are being accessed, [[(d)]] automatically opening and initializing the new first software application[[s]] to also access records related to the current patient accessed by the second software application

wherein the first and second software applications may be any of the set of software applications.

109. (currently amended) The method of claim 108 wherein the step of receiving input from the user receives input directing the new first software applications to be opened in one of multiple workspaces, each workspace providing a graphically distinct display on the graphical user-interface, and wherein:

the step of ~~reviewing currently the~~ analyzing currently open software applications reviews currently open software applications only in the identified one of the multiple workspaces.

110. (previously presented) The method of claim 108 wherein each given workspace provides a graphical boundary, and wherein a new software application provides a graphical interface that is located within a graphical boundary of a workspace with which it is associated.

111. (previously presented) The method of claim 108 further including the step of accepting input from a user to switch between workspaces.

112. (previously presented) The method of claim 111 further including the step of accepting input from a user to switch between open software applications within a workspace.

113. (currently amended) The method of claim 108 wherein the ~~current~~ first patient is determined from a record identifier.

114. (currently amended) The method of claim 108 wherein the ~~current~~ first patient is determined from a patient ~~identification number identifier~~.

115. (previously presented) The method of claim 108 wherein the software applications include applications for scheduling patient appointments, applications for entering patient demographic data, applications for entering clinical documentation with respect to patient visits, applications for billing patients, and applications for clinical order entry.

116. (currently amended) The method of claim 108 further including the step of reviewing the electronic healthcare database to determine additional data in the electronic healthcare database based on the ~~current~~ patient accessed by the second software application and uses using the additional data to initialize the new first software application..

117. (previously presented) The method of claim 108 further including the step of receiving input from the user to provide additional data.

118. (new) The electronic healthcare system of claim 97 wherein the provider program runs on the electronic computer to further:

(v) after either steps (iii) or (iv) receive input from the user through the graphical user-interface identifying a third software application to be initialized and opened; and

(vi) opening and initializing the third software application to also access records of the one of the first and second software applications.

119. (new) The method of claim 108 further including the steps of:

(f) after either steps (d) or (e) receive input from a user through the graphical user-interface identifying a third software application to be initialized and opened; and

(g) opening and initializing the third software application to also access records of the one of the first and second patient.

120. (new) A patient-context-sensitive user interface for a healthcare information system comprising:

a user terminal displaying a graphical workspace on which multiple different applications accessing patient records may be opened;

a program executable on an electronic computer and communicating with the user terminal to:

(i) allow the user to independently open any of the applications in any order as a new application in the workspace by receipt of a user command;

(ii) if no other applications are open in the workspace, upon receipt of the user command, prompting the user to identify a patient whose records will be accessed by the new application; and

(iii) if at least one other application is open as a current application in the workspace, upon receipt of the user command identifying records of the same patient whose records are being accessed by the current application and opening the new application with those records.